

## **EPA Region 9 Gold King Mine Spill Response Update 8/XX/15**

### **Navajo Nation Impacts**

The discharge water plume was identified this morning entering the San Juan at confluence with Animas River.

The discharge has yet to cross the Navajo Nation boundary, near Hogback, but Navajo officials have reacted quickly, assessing their water intake systems and issuing a precautionary "do not use" public service announcement regarding tap water.

Region 9 reached out to Navajo Nation EPA (NNEPA) officials and subsequently were requested assist w ambient river sampling in the San Juan River. The Navajo EPA surface water monitoring program (Shiprock Office) collected water and sediment samples from the San Juan River Friday and Saturday - prior to the spill impact.

NNEPA also requested drinking water sampling support immediately for Navajo operated drinking water wells (Montezuma Creek) and a water intake.

The drinking water intake is located in Mexican Hat UT is off line. Two feeder canals from the San Juan were closed as a precaution. EPA and NNEPA will conduct sampling to ensure water quality in these locations.

### **EPA Region 9 Response Activities**

Region 9 deployed 2 START contractors to coordinate and assist them with sample collection and lab services and will assist in creating a sampling Task Force with NNEPA, Navajo water agencies and potentially the Bureau of Reclamation.

Region 9 also is deploying an On Scene Coordinator (OSC) to Durango to coordinate Navajo sampling Task Force updates and results with the Region 8 incident command post and will ensure command messages get back to Navajo officials in this early phase of the response.

A second OSC will deploy to the Navajo Nation in Farmington on Monday to coordinate additional field activities. Other Region 9 staff may assist with these roles including a drinking water expert perhaps.

Region 9 will also deploy a Public Information Officer (PIO) to participate in a Joint Information Center (JIC), presently in Durango, with and other the affected Federal, State, County and Tribal agencies.

Two Community Involvement Coordinators will be deploying Sunday to Farmington.